

Message Text

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ACTION AID-59

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 AF-06 IO-11 IGA-02 CEA-01

CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 CIEP-01

SP-02 STR-04 TRSE-00 LAB-04 SIL-01 SAM-01 OMB-01

AGR-05 L-03 H-02 DODE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 /141 W

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R 111528Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7124

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY PARIS

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PARIS FOR HELMAN

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAID, XA, BE

SUBJ: CLUB DES AMIS DU SAHEL

1. AID DAA FOR AFRICA BROWN MET WITH BELGIAN OFFICIALS ON MARCH 9 TO DISCUSS US VIEWS REGARDING CLUB DES AMIS DU SAHEL. SEPARATE MEETINGS HELD WITH LENAERTS, CHIEF OF CABINET FOR DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AND WITH MADAME VERVALCKE, DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION OF BELGIAN COOPERATION. LENAERTS EXPECTS TO LEAD BELGIAN DELEGATION TO CLUB MEETING BUT MME VERVALCKE, WHO HEAVILY INVOLVED IN SAHEL ACTIVITIES OVER PAST TWO YEARS, WILL PROBABLY DO MAJOR PREPARATORY WORK FOR BELGIAN PARTICIPATION.

2. DISCUSSION WITH LENAERTS QUITE GENERAL, RANGING OVER NUMBER OF ISSUES CONCERNING BELGIAN AND US AID PROGRAMS IN AFRICA. WITH RESPECT TO CLUB MEETING, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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LENAERTS CALLED IT A POSITIVE INITIATIVE WHICH SHOULD

BE SUPPORTED BY DONORS. SINCE FOREIGN MINISTER WILL BE IN ZAIRE AT TIME OF CLUB, LENAERTS WOULD NORMALLY BE THERE ALSO. GIVEN IMPORTANCE OF CLUB MEETING, HOWEVER, HE WOULD GO TO DAKAR INSTEAD. LENAERTS ALSO NOTED THAT SUPPORT FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WAS HIGH IN BELGIUM, EVEN HIGHER THAN PRIORITY GOVERNMENT COULD GIVE TO DEVELOPMENT FINANCING IN VIEW OF OTHER PRESSURES ON BUDGETARY RESOURCES. HOWEVER HE LEFT CLEAR IMPRESSION THAT IF CLUB SUCCEEDS IT COULD CATCH BELGIAN PUBLIC AND PARLIAMENTARY INTEREST IN WAY WHICH COULD INFLUENCE AMOUNTS OF RESOURCES AVAILABLE IN THE AREA.

3. IN DISCUSSIONS WITH VERVALCKE, BROWN PROVIDED COMPLETE EXPOSITION ON US VIEWS REGARDING CLUB POTENTIAL. AS EXPECTED, VERVALCKE RESPONDED VERY POSITIVELY TO PROGRAMMATIC CONCEPTS INVOLVED. HOWEVER, SHE RECALLED ENTHUSIASM WHICH EXISTED PRIOR TO EARLIER CILSS SPONSORED MEETINGS (E.G., OUAGADOUGOU, BAMAKO) WHICH HAD LED TO LITTLE ACTION. SHE WONDERED WHETHER THE CLUB WOULD BE ANYTHING MORE. BROWN EXPRESSED BELIEF THAT AS RESULT DAC, US AND OTHER CONVERSATIONS WITH AFRICANS, THEY NOW RECOGNIZED MORE CLEARLY THE NEED TO FIND COMMON APPROACHES TO SAHEL DEVELOPMENT. AMONG OTHER THINGS, AFRICANS SEE WORLD PUBLIC ATTENTION ON SAHEL HAS SUBSIDED AND THEY DO NOT WANT LOSE WHAT MAY BE A LAST OPPORTUNITY GATHER BENEFITS FROM WORLD CONCERN. WHILE AFRICANS OBVIOUSLY WANT ACTION TO ENSUE FROM CLUB MEETING, THEY ALSO APPEAR PREPARED RECOGNIZE NEED FOR FUNDAMENTAL ADDITIONAL STUDY IN SOME SECTORS SO LONG AS THERE SEEMS TO BE REAL POTENTIAL FOR CONTINUED DONOR SUPPORT.

4. VERVALCKE ALSO NOTED THAT IN PAST AFRICANS HAD BEEN WILLING GIVE CILSS RESPONSIBILITY FOR REGIONAL PROJECTS BUT JEALOUSLY GUARDED NATIONAL PROGRAMS AS THEIR OWN PREROGATIVE. WHAT COULD CLUB DO ABOUT THIS. BROWN RECALLED HISTORY OF LIVESTOCK SECTOR MEETINGS, ORIGINALLY CALLED BY FED, THEN JOINTLY BY FED/CILSS, AND NOW PLANNED IN FUTURE BY CILSS. WHILE FAR FROM LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PERFECT, THERE HAS FLOWED FROM THOSE MEETINGS INCREASING CONSENSUS BETWEEN AFRICANS AND DONORS ON APPROACH TO LIVESTOCK DEVELOPMENT. NOW DONORS AND AFRICANS CAN WORK ON NATIONAL LIVESTOCK PROGRAMS WHICH INCREASINGLY REFLECT REGIONAL STRATEGY. THIS APPROACH CAN BE FOLLOWED IN OTHER SECTORS WHERE COMPREHENSIVE SECTORAL STRATEGIES ARE DEVELOPED THROUGH THE CLUB AND THEN WORKED BOTH INTO REGIONAL AND NATIONAL PROGRAMS.

5. VERVALCKE PICKED UP FROM THIS BY SUGGESTING THAT ONE WAY OF INCREASING RESOURCE FLOWS INTO SAHEL IS BY GETTING INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS LIKE ICRASAT AND ILCA TO DIRECT MORE OF THEIR RESOURCES INTO SAHELION COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM ARRANGEMENTS.

6. VERVALCKE QUESTIONED RELATIONSHIP OF CLUB ACTIVITIES

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AND CILSS/UNSO PROGRAM. HOPED PROGRESS DEFINITIONS WOULD NOT EXCLUDE, FOR EXAMPLE, AGRO-METEOROLOGICAL NETWORK IN WHICH BELGIANS HIGHLY INTERESTED. BROWN RESPONDED THAT US CONSIDERS CILSS/UNSO PROGRAM TO BE INTEGRAL PART OF CLUB ACTIVITIES. INDIVIDUAL CILSS/UNSO PROJECTS MAY CHANGE SOMEWHAT AS CLUB BETTER DEFINES OVERALL STRATEGY, BUT THERE IS NO REASON WHY DONORS SHOULD DELAY IN SEEKING IMPLEMENT

CILSS/UNSO PROGRAM. IN FACT, IT IS JUST THIS KIND OF SPIN-OFF OF PROGRAMS UNDER THE WING OF PARTICULAR DONORS IN CONSULTATION WITH CILSS WHICH MAY BE WAY THE CLUB CAN BEST WORK.

7. VERVALCKE EXPRESSED CONCERN AS TO HOW ONE KEEPS MOMENTUM GOING EVEN IF CLUB MEETING GOES WELL. BROWN PROVIDED HER WITH COPY AID'S PROPOSED PAPER FOR PRESENTATION AT CLUB AND NOTED OUR RECOMMENDATION REGARDING USE OF WORKING GROUP TO DEVELOP CLEARER LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CLUB-WIDE APPROACHES TO DEALING WITH PROGRAMMING, MANAGEMENT AND RESOURCE FLOW NEEDS. US HOPES THIS IDEA OF WORKING GROUPS CAN BE MORE GENERALLY USED AND SERVE AS THE MEANS FOR PROVIDING CONTINUITY AND DEEPER COMMON UNDERSTANDING OF VARIOUS SAHEL DEVELOPMENT PROBLEMS. VERVALCKE AGREED THIS A PROMISING APPROACH.

8. IN SUMMARY, VERVALCKE AND LENAERTS GAVE POSITIVE SUPPORT TO CLUB AND SEEMED FULLY SATISFIED WITH EXPLANATIONS GIVEN ON CERTAIN QUESTIONS WHICH CONCERNED THEM.

9. BROWN NOTED THAT WHILE SEVERAL EC MEMBER STATES APPEARED QUITE POSITIVE ABOUT THE CLUB, FED FUNCTIONARIES SEEMED MUCH LESS POSITIVE. BROWN SUGGESTED IT WOULD BE REGRETTABLE IF EUROPEAN COMMUNITY REPRESENTATION APPEARED COOL TO CLUB CONCEPTS AT DAKAR MEETING. VERVALCKE AGREED THIS ATTITUDE EXISTED AT FED STAFF LEVEL. SHE GAVE AN EXPLANATION NOT UNLIKE THAT EARLIER PROVIDED BY MAURICE FALEY (SEE SEPTEL). SHE FELT AS RESULT LOME CONVENTION AND PROGRAMMING PROCESSES NOW BEING UNDERTAKEN, THESE ATTITUDES WOULD CHANGE OVER TIME. BROWN RESPONDED BY INDICATING SUCH CHANGE WOULD BE WELCOME, BUT IT STILL APPEARED IMPORTANT THAT SENIOR LEVELS OF EC DG VIII AIM AT A POSITIVE FED PARTICIPATION AT DAKAR AND IT MAY WELL BE DESIRABLE FOR CERTAIN MEMBER STATES, LIKE BELGIUM, TO MAKE THIS CLEAR TO DG VIII.
HILLENBRAND

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